

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4512
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO

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E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: PCI HOLDS CENTRAL COMMITTEE SESSION

SUMMARY. THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) HAS CONCLUDED AN UNEXCEPTIONAL THREE-DAY SESSION OF ITS CENTRAL COMMITTEE (CC). PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL BERLINGUER DELIVERED THE OPENING SPEECH WHICH WAS ESSENTIALLY DEFENSE IN TONE AND WHICH REITERATED THE VALIDITY OF THE STRATEGY OF THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE ADOPTED AT THE LAST PARTY CONGRESS. DISCUSSION AT THE CC SESSION REVEALED NO CRITICISM OF THE LEADERSHIP ALTHOUGH IT DID NOTE DISCONTENT AMONG THE PARTY BASE. PRIOR TO CONCLUDING. THE CC APPROVED BERLINGUER'S SPEECH AND IT VOTED TO ESTABLISH TWO COMMISSIONS CHARGED WITH PREPARING FOR THE PARTY'S FIFTEENTH CONGRESS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR NEXT MARCH.
END SUMMARY

1. PCI SECRETARY GENERAL ENRICO BERLINGUER'S INTRODUCTORY SPEECH BEGAN A THREE DAY (JULY 24-26) SESSION OF THE PARTY'S
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CENTRAL COMMITTEE DEVOTED TO A REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE FORMATION OF THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT IN MARCH, SUPPORTED BY A MAJORITY INCLUDING THE COMMUNISTS, AND TO A DISCUSSION OF THE PARTY'S ACTIONS IN THE COMING MONTHS AS IT FACES A DIFFICULT POLITICAL SITUATION AND A FORTHCOMING CONGRESS. CONTRARY TO MANY EXPECTATIONS, BERLINGUER'S SPEECH, WHICH LASTED THREE HOURS, WAS DEVOID OF NEW INITIATIVES AND

SEEMD TO MANY TO BE DEFENSE IN TONE. HIGHLIGHTS OF
THOSE POINTS MADE BY BERLINGUER ARE AS FOLLOWS.

2. GOVERNMENT. BERLINGUER TERMED AS SIGNIFICANT THE PCI'S
ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNING MAJORITY, AN EVENT THAT ENDED
THIRTH YEARS OF DISCRIMINATION TOWARDS THE PARTY. HE NOTED
THAT THE PCI HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN GAINING ITS OBJECTIVE OF
DIRECT PARTICIPATION IN AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, A FACT THAT
HE ATTRIBUTED TO THREE PRINCIPAL FACTORS: A) HEAVY
PRESSURE FROM WESTERN GOVERNMENTS, PRIMARILY THE THE USG IN THE
FORM OF ITS JANUARY 12 STATEMENT B) SERIOUS RESISTANCE
FROM CERTAIN SECTORS OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY;
AND C) OPPOSITION OF
THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND THE LACK OF POLITICAL COURAGE ON
THE PART OF THE SOCIALISTS. BERLINGUER TALKED OF AN
EVENTUAL ENTRY INTO AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, BUT IN
TERMS THAT DID NOT SUGGEST AN ULTIMATUM OR A PARTICULAR
THE LIMIE. THE PCI SCERETARY SUGGESTED THATTHE PCI WOULD
BE MORE AGGRESSIVE IN ENSURING THAT THE GOVERNMENT PROCEED
WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM AGREED TO WHDN IT
WAS FORMED. FOR THE MOMENT, BERLINGUER NOTED THAT THE
CENTRAL PROBLEM IS QUOTE A CONSOLIDATION OF THE MAJORITY
THAT WAS FORMED IN PARLIAMENT LAST MACH 16. END QUOTE

3. RELATIONS WITH OTHER PARTIES. POINTING TO THE DEFEAT
OF THOSE FORCES IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DC)
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WHICH HAD OPPOSED PCI ENTRY INTO A PARLIMANENTARY MAJORITY,
AND TAKING NOTE OF THE EFFECTIVE MANNER IN WHICH THE DC
LEADERSHIP DIRECTED THE PARTY DURING THE MORO KIDNAPPING.
BERLINGUER NEVERTHELESS DREW ATTENTION TO CERTAIN NEGATVIE
ASPECTS OF RECENT DC BEHAVIOR. HE SPECIFICICALLY CRITICIZED
THE CONTINUED EXISTANCE WITHIN DC RANKS OF GROUPS HOSTILE
TO THE PRESENT PALRIAMENTARY MAJORITY. ADDITIONALLY, HE
CITED THE RESISTANCE BY VIRTUALLY THE ENTIRE DC TO ANY
MEASURES THAT WOUOD LEAD TO EITHER A REAL ECONOMIC RENEWAL
OR TO A REDIMENSIONING OF ITS POSITION OF POWER. TURNING
TO THE SOCIALLISTS (PSI), BERLINGUER WARNED OF SIGNED THAT
THE PARTY IS MOVING TO A POSITION OFSYSTEMATIC STRUGGLE
AGAINST THE COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH WOULD LEAD TO A SPLIT
IN THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS IN THE COUNTRY. THE
PCI SECRETARY SUGGESTED THAT THE PSI POSITION IS MOTIVATED
BY A DESIRE TO EFFECTUATE A DECLINE OF COMMUNIST STRENGTH
AND A QUOTE EMARGINATION END QUOTE OF THE PCI.

4. THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE. BERLINGUER REITERATED THE VALIDITY
OF THE STRATEGY OF THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE. HE STRESSED THAT
THERE REMAIN VALID TODAY QUOTE ALL THE REASONS THAT HAVE LED
US TO REJECT THE STRATEGY OF THE SO-CALLEDALTERNATIVE OF THE

LEFT. END QUOTE.

5. THE PARTY BASE. REFERRING TO THE PARTY'S BASE, BERLINGUER OBSERVED THAT QUOTE MANY OF THE DIFFICULTIES THAT WE ENCOUNTER DERIVE FROM THE FACT THAT NON ALL OF OUR COMRADES HAVE A FULL AWARENESS OF THE HIGH LEVEL, WHICH THE POLITICAL STRUGGLE IN ITALY HAS REACHED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE GRAVE CRISIS OF THE COUNTRY, BUT ALSO OF THE ADVANCES MADE BY THE WORKERS'

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MOVEMENT AND BY OUR PARTY IN RECENT YEARS. END QUOTE. GIVEN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, BERLINGUER CALLED FOR A RENEWED EFFORT BY THE PARTY APPARATUS TO EDUCATE THE RANK AND FILE MEMBERSHIP. AT THE SAME TIME HE NOTED THAT EVEN AS THE PARTY WORKS FOR A POLICY OF NATIONAL UNITY, IT MUST NOT LOSE ITS PARTICULAR IDENTITY. IN THIS RESPECT, HE OBSERVED THAT ON SOME OCCASSIONS LOCAL PARTY OFFICIALS HAVE SOUGHT POLITICAL AGREEMENTS REGARDLESS OF THE COST, WITH THE DC AND THE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES. WITH AN EYE TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS SHCHEDULEDFOR THE FIRST HALF OF 1980, BERLINGUER SAID THAT LOCAL POLITICS MUST NOT BE PRACTICED AS A RITUALISTIC COPY OF NATIONAL POLITICS, AND HE SUGGESTED THAT IF THE POLITICAL COSTS OF A PARTICULAR AGREEMENT SEEM TO HIGH, IT IS BETTER TO GO INTO OPPOSITION.

6. THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECT. BERLINGUER TOUCHED UPON

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AT TWO POINTS IN HIS SPEECH. IN THE INTRODUCTION, HE REITERATED THE PARTY'S SHARP CRITICISM OF RECENT ACTIONS TAKEN TO LIMIT THE FREEDOM OF DISSENT IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE SOVIET UNION. BERLINGUER STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT IT IS ALSO NECESSARY TO DENOUNCE REACTIONARY DICTATORSHIP WHICH EXISTS IN MANY AREAS OF THE WORLD AND POLITICAL PERSECUTION THAT IS PRESENT IN THE WESTERN WORLD INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES, QUOTE AS AMBASSADOR YOUNG REMINDED US END QUOTE. BERLINGUER ALSO WARNED AGAINST ATTEMPTS BEING MADE IN WESTERN COUNTRIES, IN REACTION TO CERTAIN EVENTS IN THE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES, TO RELAUNCH THE COLD WAR AND TO BLOCK ATTEMPTS TO REACH DISARMAMENT AGREEMENT. POINTING TO THE PCI'S MAJOR INTERNATIONAL TASK, BERLINGUER DESCRIBED IT AS A TASK TO ADVANCE IN ITALY AND IN WESTERN EUROPE A ROAD OF TRANSFORMATION IN THE DIRECTION OF SOCIALISM THAT CORRESPONDS TO THE PECuliarITIES OF COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE REACHED HIGHER STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRODUCTIVE FORCES....END QUOTE.

7. FIFTEENTH CONGRESS. IN CONNECTION WITH PLANS FOR THE PARTY'S FIFTEENTH CONGRESS, TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR NEXT MARCH, BERLINGUER CALLED FOR THE CREATION OF TWO COMMISSIONS. ONE WOULD PREPARE THESES FOR THE CONGRESS WHICH WOULD BE SUBJECT OF A CENTRAL COMMITTEE SESSION TO BE HELD IN DECEMBER. THE OTHER COMMISSION WOULD BE ENTRUSTED WITH DRAWING UP PROPOSAL FOR REFORMING THE STRUCTURE AND THE STATUTES OF THE PARTY.

8. THE DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION. JUDGING FROM THE SUMMARIES OF THE VARIOUS SPEECHES DELIVERED AT THE CC SESSION WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN L'UNITA, THE DISCUSSION FOLLOWING BERLINGUER'S ADDRESS WAS TAME AND DEVOID OF ANY SHARP CRITICISM EITHER OF THE PRESENT PARTY LINE OR OF THE LEADERSHIP. THE CRITICISM EITHER THAT DID EMERGE FOLLOWED CLOSELY THAT WHICH BERLINGUER HIMSELF HAD RAISED. SEVERAL SPEAKERS TOOK NOTE OF THE DIFFICULTIES FACING THE PARTY WITH LUCIANO GRUPPI, DIRECTOR OF THE GRAMSCI INSTITUTE STATING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT THE PCI IS LIVING QUOTE ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT MOMENTS SINCE THE LIBERATION END QUOTE. HE ADDED THAT THE DIFFICULTY ARISES IN LARGE MEASURE FROM THE FACT THAT THE PCI IS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT MAJORITY QUOTE WITHOUT HOLDING THE LEVERS OF GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD PERMIT IT TO CONFIDENTLY THESE RESPONSIBILITIES WITH GREATER EFFICIENCY.

END QUOTE. GRUPPI ALSO DREW ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT LONG THE BASE OF THE PARTY THERE IS NOSTALGIA FOR THE OPPOSITION AND A RELUCTANCE AT TIMES TO SHARE THE LINE OF THE PARTY.

9. THE CC CONCLUDED WITH BRIEF SUMMARY REMARKS BY BERLINGUER AND WITH THE ADOPTION OF A SHORT RESOLUTION APPROVING THE INDUCTORY SPEECH OF BERLINGUER AND THE CERTAIN OF THE TWO COMMISSIONS TASKED WITH BEGINNING THE PREPARATORY WORK FOR THE FORTHCOMING PARTY CONGRESS. IN HIS CONCLUDING COMMENTS, BERLINGUER CLOSELY FOLLOWED THE LINE HE HAD TAKEN IN HIS OPENING SPEECH WHILE AT THE SAME TIME TAKING ISSUE WITH LOCAL OBSERVERS WHO HAVE TALKED OF QUOTE A SENSE OF BEWILDERMENT END QUOTE AMONG THE PCI LEADERSHIP.

10. COMMENT. THE JUST CONCLUDED CC SESSION STRIKES US AS UNEXCEPTIONAL IN CONTENT AND DEFENSIVE IN NATURE. DESPITE THE SETBACKS THAT THE PARTY HAS RECENTLY ENCOUNTERED, THE LEADERSHIP HAS ESSENTIALLY CHOSEN THE COURSE OF PUTTING THE BEST POSSIBLE FACE ON THE POSITIVE GAINS WHICH HAVE COME THE PCI'S WAY, I.E. PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNING MAJORITY, AND OF REITERATING THE LONG TERM VALIDITY OF THE STRATEGY OF THE HISTORICAL COMPROMISE. AT THE SAME TIME, IN RESPONSE TO THE EVIDENT DISCONTENT AT THE BASE AND TO THE SETBACKS WHICH ARE PART OF THE PRESENT POLITICAL REALITY, THE LEADERSHIP RECOGNIZES THE NEED FOR THE ADAPTATION OF MORE AGGRESSIVE TACTICS AS A MEANS FOR ADVANCING TOWARDS THE PCI'S POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. AS THE PCI MOVES TOWARDS ITS NEXT PARTY CONGRESS, ONE OF ITS CRUCIAL INTERNAL DEBATES WILL BE OVER HOW TO FINE TUNE A CARROT AND STICK LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLICY IN ITS RELATIONS WITH THE NATION'S OTHER POLITICAL FORCES. GARDNER

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